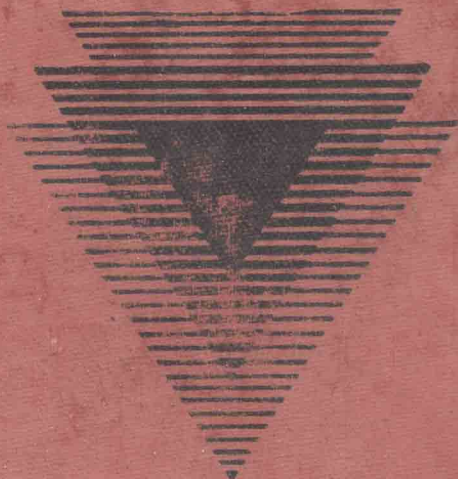




YOUTH WITH A CAPITAL "WHY"

A. LINDSAY GLEGG



YOUTH WITH A CAPITAL "WHY?"

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A. LINDSAY GLEGG,
A.C.G.I., A.M.I.E.E.

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YOUTH WITH
A CAPITAL "WHY?"

By

A. LINDSAY GLEGG, J.P.

A.C.G.I., A.M.I.E.E.

Author of

"Life with a Capital 'L'"

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FOREWORD

WE are living in unique days. It is an age of inquiry: things that were taken for granted a generation ago are now questioned on every hand. The faith of the fathers is no longer accepted by the children. With advancing education and liberty of thought, our young people are asking the why and wherefore of everything. Their minds are a big question mark; they want to know and understand something of the problems they have to face.

A generation ago youth came to its own. There was a reaction against the "to be seen and not heard" attitude, which held the field in earlier days. Youth came to the front, and for the first time the word was spelt with a capital "Y". But to-day we have gone a stage farther. This is the age when everything is being questioned and argued, and to give Youth its present characteristic we must not only spell it with a capital "Y," but recognise that it is synonymous with "*Why?*" (My Scottish friends, accustomed to pronounce their "h's," will, for once, have to adopt an English accent!)

This book does not pretend to solve all the problems of modern youth. The addresses have not been selected for that purpose, but it is hoped that the simple messages of these pages will lead many, both young and old, out of doubt and defeat into peace and victory. The same plan has been followed as in the writer's first book—*Life With A Capital "L"*: the addresses are reproduced practically in the manner in which they were delivered. This fact accounts for the "free and easy" style, the frequent use of illustration, and the lack of any literary merit.

The addresses were given at Conventions and Missions, where the application of the truth was all important. Hence the recurring note of appeal which the writer trusts will lose none of its power now that it appears in cold print.

A. LINDSAY GLEGG.

"Birchstone"

*Coombe Park,
Kingston Hill,
Surrey.*

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YOUTH WITH A CAPITAL "WHY?"

CHAPTER I

YOUTH WITH A CAPITAL "WHY?"

THERE is no harm in asking questions: in fact it is an excellent thing to do. If I had a Sunday School class I would sooner have foolish questions than stolid indifference. I would not mind if a boy asked me, "Who killed the Dead Sea?" At least it would show that he had a sense of humour, and that alone ought to give one a point of contact!

But there are serious problems in the minds of many people to-day, and youth has a right to ask questions; and we have the responsibility and privilege of answering them. One of the miracles of the Bible is that within its pages lie the solutions of so many modern problems. It is the most up-to-date book in the world. It contains the answers to all our great questions, such as, "Why did God make me?" "What am I here for?" "Whither am I going?"

THE GREATEST "WHY?"

But perhaps the greatest "*Why?*" of youth to-day is a repetition of the old question, "What must I do to be saved?" It may be expressed in various ways, or sometimes may not be openly expressed at all; nevertheless, it is everywhere deeply felt, and it is the duty of the Christian Church to present a clear answer in language that can be readily understood.

A little while ago I came into touch with a new friend. His first letter to me was rather mysterious: he wrote to me over his monomark, as he desired to maintain the strictest secrecy. He told me that he had been in hospital for three months, and that during that time he had been nursed by a Christian girl. Her life had greatly impressed him, and he had discovered that she possessed what he called the "real thing," and he wanted to know if such an experience could be his. His suggestion was that if I would name the corner of any convenient street, together with the day and the hour, and give him the number of my car, he would join me at the agreed time and place.

I drew up my car, as arranged, and a stranger stepped in, and we drove off. I made for home, and we had a meal together, and then for two hours we talked as we sat around my fire-

side. My newly-found friend soon unburdened his heart. He told me he knew the key text; it was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," but he could not understand what it meant to believe. He told me he accepted the great doctrines of the Christian Faith, but that it appeared to make no difference in his life. He did not question the deity of our Lord, or that He died on the cross, but his acquiescence in these things produced no change of heart. And, then with real earnestness, he turned to me and said: "What does it mean to believe? You preachers use terms that the ordinary man in the street does not understand. Tell me, what am I to do? What is the procedure?"

NOT KNOWING THE WAY

I believe there are many young people to-day who, if they had the courage, would like to ask the same question. There are crowds who are tired of the world's pleasures, and are longing for something better. There are multitudes of unsatisfied souls who want peace and victory, but who quite genuinely do not know the way. Perhaps it is just here that we have failed. We take too much for granted; we do not stop to explain the phrases we use, and our sermons are often too involved and obscure.

A special preacher once delivered an anniversary sermon, and after the service, on the way home, one of the congregation said to another, "Well, Mary, how did you enjoy the sermon?" "Not so grand," she answered, "I took the wrong book with me." He looked at the Bible under her arm and saw that it was the large print one she always carried to church, and so he said, "No you didn't; it is your regular Bible you've got." "Aye," she answered, "I know that, but it was a dictionary I needed this morning!"

ILLUSTRATION FROM CRICKET

I sought, therefore, to answer my friend as simply and clearly as I was able. I said to him: "To believe is to *receive*. Would you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?—then open your heart to Him; give Him a welcome. He is the Atoning Saviour who died to put away your sin. He is the Risen Lord: then ask Him into your heart, and He will come."

"But how would that enable me to be a Christian?" said my friend.

To which I replied, "You cannot live out what you haven't got; you cannot live a life you do not possess! To be a Christian is to have Christ within, and to put Him in control."

I sought for a simple illustration and I found my friend was interested in cricket. I said,

"Suppose I want to be a great batsman; how can I manage it? I dress myself up in spotless flannels, with pads and batting gloves complete, and as I walk up to the wicket, the crowd say, 'There goes a fine batsman, look at his perfect equipment!' But when the first straight ball comes along my bails are off, and I soon find myself walking back to the pavilion with another 'duck' to mar my record. It was all profession; it was all put on from the outside. I posed as a great batsman but it did not work.

"A mere profession of religion is no good; the formalities of church observance will, in themselves, bring no change of heart. Christianity is not a matter of phraseology, however pious it may sound: it is not something that is *added on* to life, like the reciting of a creed, or formal attendance at church worship. The solution of the problem is not found thus.

"But my opportunities of becoming a cricketer are not yet exhausted, for I can take lessons; I can go out and practise daily, and by perseverance and effort seek to become a great cricketer, but I can see little hope of success along that line.

"And so it is in the Christian experience: it is not a case of trying to do one's best, of self-effort, or self-discipline. The way into the 'real thing' is not by trying to save oneself any more than I could hope, by diligence and

practice, to become a fine batsman. 'Doing one's best' sounds so excellent and reasonable that somebody says at once, 'But nobody can do more than his best?' Exactly! And that is why we all need a Saviour just because doing our best will never save us. It is a great thing to come to the end of ourselves and to see our need for Someone to undertake our case and see us through."

So, in the next place, I had a suggestion to put before my friend. In a word it was this: that I should, by some miraculous power, place the great cricketer, Jack Hobbs, within my heart! I would invite him into my life and put him in control, and thus equipped I would walk up to the wicket and face the bowling. "Remember," I said, "Jack Hobbs is within me, and as the ball comes down the pitch, he watches it through my eyes. My hands are holding the bat, but Jack Hobbs is in command, and he guides my arms, and controls my wrists, so that I hit the ball full and square to the boundary. The next ball, in the same way, is perfectly played, and all the wiles of the bowler are defied, and I score my first century."

"But," said my friend, "you cannot get Jack Hobbs inside you!" "No," I replied, "and that is why I will never be a great cricketer. But to be a Christian, a miracle has

to take place—Christ, by His Spirit, comes into the heart of every true believer, and He comes in to take control and to defeat the wiles of the devil. He comes in *to do the saving*. He takes possession of my thoughts so that I may have, 'the mind of Christ.' He enters my heart and fills it with His love. He looks through my eyes, and gives me a compassion for all who are bound by sin, and so makes the 'real thing' not only possible but actual. This is how the Apostle Paul put it: 'I live, yet not I, Christ liveth in me.' Writing to Christians, he said, 'Ye are partakers of the divine nature.' And in another place, 'Christ who is our life.' So that when Christ comes into our hearts we have a new life, we are 'born again.'"

"I HAVE THE REAL THING"

It was late in the evening when my friend rose to leave. I motored him back to the same corner. He shut the door of my car, and waved me good-night, but just as the car was moving off, he opened the door again, and putting in his head he said, "Do you guarantee that the way into the Christian life is as simple as all that?" And I replied, "I guarantee it, and I will give you the Saviour's word, 'Behold; I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in.'" Again the door shut, and we

parted. A fortnight later he gripped my hand, and said, "It works, I have the real thing."

"To as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name."